

Victorville, Calif.,
12 Dec., 1923

Dear Pappa,

Your welcome letters of November 24th and 26th came this morning. A thousand thanks! Pappa's [your] invitation to come home is a great temptation, but I, nevertheless, cannot consider it. My health is improving slowly but surely, and my mind becomes clearer by the month. I am not even considering returning to Japan right now. Naturally I appreciate colossally, that Mr. Gadelius would like to have me back, but I think that would be a mistake for both of us right now.

I will stay with Union Oil until next September, take care of my health, save as much as I can, and then hope that, with God's help, I can take a step up. My dream continues to be, to spend a couple of years at College, but right now that appears pretty doubtful.

It is amazing how much Sven has grown. Was it the sun that distorted his facial expression in the photo, or has he become as ugly as a Chinaman? He is as tall as Mamma. Is that Kalle's old sweater that he has on?

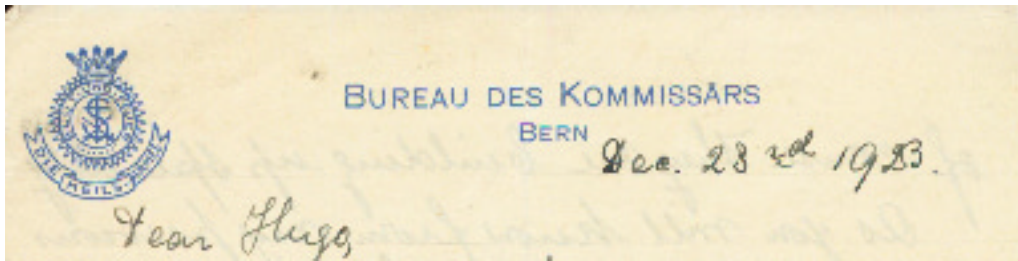
Tonight I long for a Turkish bath. Has Pappa [you] quit that sort of weight-loss program? How many kilos does Pappa [you] weigh now? I can see in the photo that Pappa [you] is still in the heavy-weight class.

I see that you have an early winter. I hope that the weather will be ideal for Christmas and the New Year. We have frosty nights now, bitterly cold, but warm, sunshine-filled days.

Millions of warm greetings and wishes for a triumphant, lovely New Year.

Pappa's own

Hugo



Thanks for your letter of Nov. 11th with Sam's letter and report of Mr. Iglehart which I hereby return.

I first of all want to thank you for the lovely hankies you sent me for my birthday. If you had mentioned them in your letter I would have thanked you before and waited till they had come before writing but from your vague description of "something hardly appropriate" I thought you meant the pictures from Japan from the Osaka paper of which I have also received the second part some time ago. Thanks so much. They are so very interesting. It would seem strange to go back to Japan now to see all houses down altho' of course they are building up speedily.

As you will know from my previous letter and perhaps from Chris too, mother is still always in bed. Altho' she is advancing rather than going back, it is a very slow progress and she does get disheartened at times. However we are full of hope and so grateful it has gone so well in those anxious days of which I think I wrote you. We have mostly to do with the nerves and a general weakness. If it was only spring instead of winter but we hope and believe that God will help us thru and that next year will be a continuous progress so that mommy will get quite her old self again. Besides our usual Xmas tree I got a tiny one to put in mothers room for just a little while so she will also have a Xmas tree. It will feel lonely without Chris, but we are so glad he is happy. He has passed thru a terrible night and morning. When we thought Mommy was going to heaven, we wrote Chris and when all passed over so wonderfully we sent a wire about the time Chris had received that letter to reassure him all was well. During the hours between the letter and the cable he has consecrated himself afresh to God and put himself entirely in His Hands. He wrote us such glorious, joyful letters! I can't say how thankful we are all to God. Mommy said that she now understands why Chris should leave home and why she should be ill. If it was only for just this new experience for Chris, she is glad God arranged things as He did. He is our wonderful Helper and Father. I write you this in confidence Hugo dear as I know you love Chris and will be glad with us for this strengthening of his faith. We knew when he left us for America that he was saved and in God's will, but he has gone even a step further now notwithstanding the many temptations and attractions in our beloved America. How good God is and what a strength and Help. Glory to His name. Its two days before Xmas and the worst kind of weather. Sleet storm and such a wind. Happily yesterday was the last day of the pots [she is talking about Salvation Army kettles] so our people don't have to stand in this weather. (I did not stand as I have been kept in for a day or 10 with a bronchitis but it's better now.) Dad is home for Xmas for a change so we will at least have 4 of the family together. We have a little feast for all the officers children and HQ officers in the Training Garrison but otherwise we have a quiet time. We had planned to have some of the fellows out for a sledding party but the rain of course changes that.

I do hope you have not [sic] had a lovely time over Xmas. I especially think of you these days as you are away from home and Xmas is a family feast. I hope you'll have a nice time with the Bagnalls if you go to Los Angeles during the holidays. And as for New Years Eve? Do tell me what you've done. Don't feel blue old boy, the New Year will have great things for you, I am sure. One can't just always keep on burying oneself and pretending not to receive inquiries or not answering them! Sooner or later you've got to come out of your little nest of mystery and tell us all about it. And it surely has been better for you to go out to California than to stick in that College. Look at Kaleb half killing himself to get thru! You're much better off and knowledge one gets thru life is worth more than what one finds in books. Don't you feel blue or grumpy Hugo dear. Good knows best. Read the promises he gave to Joshua (Ch. 1:1-10) and He is still the same and strong. Isaih 40:28-31. He may be preparing you for a great and wondrous future if you will only let him. Think of Joseph. If we could see in the future how many cares and worries would be spared us, but we need not worry as God takes care of us and we trust in Him. (Math 6:32-34) For your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things - Courage and patience and confidence etc. He knows it all.

I love the last part specially in French where it says: "Don't worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will take care of itself. Everyday has just enough worries and trials of its own." Not too much and not too little. Who knows but some day you may be a great influential man and if by chance we would meet you'd say I was right altho' you'll hardly remember. It seems hard now but you'll know one day why it had to be. And as to not going to College. Why boy, when God wanted me to give up America and a fine job, the dream of my life, I thought I made a tremendous sacrifice and so it was at the moment but look what He has given me in return! I certainly did not lose by the exchange. You won't either. What is more wonderful than to serve God. And as to going to America. Well I still dream of it. Of course to go as an officer would be more difficult but as I wanted to go there to earn money and have a good time why shouldn't I go there now to help the people. I know they are more in need of officers there than here, but still God wants me to stay here for the present to help mother and dad and Leo besides my work so I gladly stay and dream on. Some day who knows we'll meet maybe over there. I may come and collect at your door. Gee wouldn't that be fun! We could talk about heaps of things. I often think back with pleasure of your little visit to Bern. It was too bad you could not have stayed a bit longer. Well Hugo cheer up and accept my very best wishes for a prosperous and joyful year. Dad and Ma have their silver wedding on the 5th of Jan. The time flies and there is so much to be done. May God help us to use our time to His Glory. May the Lord bless you abundantly. Love from Mother Dad and Leo (who thanks for the funny papers) and from Freida.

[At the bottom of the first page, upside down, Freida writes:] Its so sweet and thoughtful of you to send those funny papers. Leo enjoy them hugely, and so do I when I have time to glance at them!

Boston, Mass.
December 28, 1923

Dear Parents,

I am visiting Chris [de Groot] over the holidays. I expected to find some snow up here so that I could ski, but was disappointed. I have had a thorough rest, however, for which I am thankful, before starting in preparing for the exams that loom up before me. How I would have liked to transform Boston into Stockholm or transport myself to Sweden, but I have been with you in spirit. As Sam expresses it "Our little family will be scattered like never before," but at the same time I doubt whether there are many families in this world that will be as united as ours - in thought, in happy memories, in love - no matter what circumstances we are in or what surrounds us. I was with you in spirit Xmas Eve as Chris and I walked up Beacon Hill. I guess you were up there when here listening to the carols and looking at the hundreds of candles placed in the windows. I can imagine just how you felt to be separated from your boys who had romped around you as kids but there was a calm assurance in your hearts that they were safe in Jesus' kindly hands. So, while the absence may have been trying, you nevertheless had the conviction that all three were out in the world seeking to do big things right. And when we meet, we shall make up for long absences and disappointments.

Does not Boston remind you somewhat of Stockholm? Old buildings, narrow streets and considerable water. The traditions are old and the culture on a high standing. The people are conservative and the strata of social life is also of such a gulf-like nature as there exists at home.

I spent X-mas Day together with Chris at a rich family's home. He had met them in Switzerland and is considered a son by them. I saw them several times after that and they were always darling. I think I might stay here over New Years; it all depending upon many things. I need to get back and study, but I also need the wonderful rest I get here.

I met the MacIntyres the other night. They were pleasant and are as father and mother to Chris.

There is much more to tell you of which I shall do immediately on my return to New York.

Loads of love!

Your Kaleb

Östersund,
December 28, 1923

Colonel Sven Wiberg
The War College
Stockholm

Dear Colonel!

Peace!

I am sending the plates*. I should have done it earlier, but I didn't get hold of them from the newspapers until today. Consequently, I beg your forgiveness for the delay.

And then a thank you for the blessing that you and Mrs. Wiberg were during your visit here. Personally, I became very encouraged, and I have heard that many others were also.

Please extend my greetings to the Mrs. Colonel**.

God Bless the Colonel

Fighting under the tri-colored banner

Paul Andersson
Lieutenant

*the Swedish word means a printer's plates

**more of the formality in Swedish from a person who is lower in rank. We would just say Mrs. Wiberg, but to be polite, he must refer to her in this indirect way which denotes her position.

Tokyo,
December 28, 1923

My Dearest Ones---

I'm at the office and only have a couple of minutes before the Post Office closes---but want to send a greeting to you, anyway.

Christmas, which is now past, was nice and calm. I'll write in more detail later on. Next week, New Year's will be celebrated, and we have a whole week's leave. I had planned to go up to the mountains to ski, but as of now, no snow has fallen, so I'm not sure about it. Maybe I will go to Nikko a couple of days, just to get away from boring Tokyo.

On Christmas Eve I received Mamma's most welcome letter acknowledging my long letter written in September. I don't understand why it took so long, since I mailed it in Kobe.

On "the day before the day"* I wired £10 as a small, but well-meant Christmas gift, via the company, and I hope it was sent on to you in time. All during this past week, my thoughts and prayers have especially been with you up there in Stockholm, and now that the New Year is coming, I wish all of you joy and happiness.

Must stop now, but will soon write again. The sincerest greetings to all of you from

Your Sam

*A Swedish expression which means December 23rd.